

Highly Qualified Teachers and Paraprofessionals

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Q What are the highly qualified requirements under NCLB?

A A highly qualified teacher is a teacher with a bachelor's degree, full state certification (intern, provisional, reciprocal or standard teaching certificate) and demonstrates subject matter competency in the academic subject assigned to teach. With the exception of special education, charter school teachers are exempt from certification requirements.

2. Q Who must be reported as highly qualified under the NCLB definition?

A All teachers in core academic content areas must be highly qualified. Core academic subjects include the following: elementary content, reading/language arts, English, mathematics, science (including the discrete areas of biology, chemistry, Physics, earth science and general science), arts (visual and music), history, geography, civics/government, economics, and foreign languages. Instructional paraprofessionals in any program supported by Title I funds must also be highly qualified.

3. Q Are charter school teachers required to meet highly qualified teacher requirements?

A All charter school teachers assigned to teach in core academic content areas are required to meet highly qualified teacher requirements. A highly qualified charter school teacher is a teacher with a bachelor's degree and demonstrates subject matter competency in the academic subject assigned to teach. Charter school teachers assigned to teach special education are required to hold an Arizona teaching certificate in the appropriate disability area.

4. Q If I am a core academic content teacher in a school that does not receive Title I funds, am I required to meet highly qualified requirements?

A All teachers in core academic content areas must be highly qualified.

5. Q What are the core academic subject areas?

A No Child Left Behind defines the "core academic subjects" to include English/language arts/reading, science (including biology, chemistry, earth science, general science, and physics), mathematics, arts (visual arts and music), foreign language, civics and government, history, economics, and geography.

6. Q ***No Child Left Behind* does not list biology, chemistry, physics, general science, or earth science as core academic subjects. Does the law require teachers who teach science to demonstrate competency in the discrete science content areas?**
- A While the list of core academic subjects in the law does not break out the sciences, states must consider their current certification requirements to determine what is an appropriate demonstration of subject-matter competency. Since Arizona currently requires subject-specific certification in the discrete areas of science, teachers must demonstrate competency in each discrete science area.
7. Q **Are teachers teaching on a Teaching Intern Certificate considered highly qualified?**
- A Teachers teaching on a Teaching Intern Certificate may be considered highly qualified. These teachers are participating in a State Board approved Alternative Path to Certification that meets NCLB requirements as defined in Public Law 107-110, January 8, 2002.
8. Q **What are the requirements for Special Education (SPED) teachers?**
- A SPED teachers must have a Bachelor's degree and full state certification as a special education teacher. Special Education teachers must be identified as "teacher of record" or "not-teacher of record".
9. Q **What does it mean to be "teacher of record"?**
- A A "teacher of record" directly instructs, evaluates, and assigns grades to students in core academic subjects. The SPED "teachers of record" in the core academic subject areas are required to meet the same subject matter competency requirements as regular education elementary, middle grade, junior high and secondary teachers.
10. Q **What does it mean if you are "not the teacher of record"?**
- A SPED teachers who are not "teacher of record" do not have to demonstrate subject-matter competency in core academic subjects if they do not directly instruct students in those subjects, or if their role is limited to providing highly qualified teachers with consultation on the adaptation of curricula, or the use of behavioral supports and interventions, or the selection of appropriate accommodations, or assisting students with study or organization skills, or reinforcing instruction the child has already received from a teacher who is highly qualified in that core academic subject.

11. Q Are English Language Learner (ELL) teachers required to demonstrate subject matter competency in the subject they are assigned to teach?

A *No Child Left Behind* requires that ELL teachers demonstrate subject-matter competency in the core academic subjects they teach. For example, an elementary ELL teacher would be required to demonstrate competency in elementary content; an ELL teacher in grades 7 and 8 would be required to demonstrate competency in English/language arts/reading; an ELL teacher in grades 9-12 would be required to demonstrate competency in English. All teachers must hold a provisional or full SEI, ESL, or BLE endorsement.

12. Q Are Early Childhood Special Education teachers required to meet the highly qualified teacher requirement?

A Early Childhood Special Education teachers must be highly qualified. However, they are highly qualified based on holding the Early Childhood Special Education certificate. Teachers may also be highly qualified based on holding a valid special education certificate with an Early Childhood Endorsement.

13. Q Does the criterion for "highly qualified" apply to private schools?

A The criterion for "highly qualified" applies to district and "not-for-profit" charter schools. However, private school teachers serving Title I students in a Title I program must meet the highly qualified requirements.

14. Q Who must complete the Teacher Attestation(s)?

A All core academic content area teachers are required to complete the Teacher Attestation during the first 4 weeks of each school year. Building administrators must verify the status of their "highly qualified" and "not-highly qualified" core academic content teachers through the Highly Qualified Teacher Application database each year. Teachers must complete a current Attestation yearly as required by the Arizona Department of Education and NCLB Law.

15. Q What documentation must be attached to the Teacher Attestation?

A The following documentation must be attached to the Teacher Attestation:

Copy of transcripts if the teacher is documenting HQT status based on a major or 24 semester hours in the content area assigned to teach; if applicable, copy of the Housse rubric and documentation of the points on the Housse (The Housse rubric is only used for those teachers who completed the Housse rubric to become highly qualified prior to June 30, 2007).

16. Q What if a teacher is teaching multiple subjects at grades 7-12?

A Teachers assigned to teach multiple subjects in grades 7-12 must complete a Teacher Attestation in each core academic content area assigned to teach. A teacher may be highly qualified in one core academic content area and not highly qualified in another core academic content area.

17. Q If a teacher is teaching grades 7-8 and the instruction is self-contained, which Teacher Attestation is the teacher required to complete?

A The teacher is required to complete the Elementary Teacher Attestation and must be “highly qualified in elementary content.”

18. Q If a teacher is teaching music or art at grades K-6, which Attestation is the teacher required to complete?

A The teacher is required to complete the Middle, Junior High, Secondary, Visual Arts (K-12), and Music (K-12) Attestation.

19. Q May I use the HOUSSE rubric to meet highly qualified teacher requirements?

A No.
Teachers in core academic areas who were highly qualified through the HOUSSE Rubric before June 30, 2007, are eligible to continue using the HOUSSE rubric to meet highly qualified requirements unless they change content areas.

20. Q Who is eligible for the Veteran’s HOUSSE Rubric?

A Teachers who have not had a classroom teaching contract since 2003-2004, who have 3 years of classroom experience before leaving the classroom, and who have continued to hold a valid teaching certificate may be eligible to use the ADE specified Veterans’ HOUSSE Rubric. ADE will determine on a case-by-case basis if a candidate fulfills the requirements.

21. Q Are paraprofessionals required to meet the highly qualified requirements under NCLB?

A Paraprofessionals with instructional duties in any program supported by Title I funds must be highly qualified at time of hire.

22. Q Who is considered an instructional paraprofessional?

A According to NCLB guidelines, an instructional paraprofessional provides one-on-one tutoring; assists with classroom management; provides instructional computer assistance, provides support in the library or media center; or provides instructional services under the direct supervision of a teacher in a Title I school-wide or targeted assistance program.

The following paraprofessional assignments are not included:

- Playground, bus, and cafeteria aides;
- Special education aides who attend only to the health care of students;
- Translators;
- Those whose sole responsibility consists of conducting parental involvement activities; and
- Those working in non-instructional roles.

23. Q How does a paraprofessional meet the highly qualified requirements in Arizona?

A According to federal guidance, an instructional paraprofessional in Title I school-wide programs or an instructional paraprofessional in a Title I targeted assistance program who is paid with Title I funds are required to meet the following requirements:

- A GED or high school diploma;
- An Associates degree or 60 semester hours of coursework documented on an official transcript from an accredited institution of higher education; or
- A rigorous standard of quality as demonstrated through passage of a formal state assessment. Arizona recognizes Para Pro (1-800-772-9476), ACT Workkeys (1-800-WORKKEY), or Master Teacher's Para Educator Learning Network (1-800-669-9633).
- A Paraprofessional Attestation and documentation must be maintained at the district or site.

24. Q Does a paraprofessional in a computer lab have to meet the highly qualified requirements?

A The answer depends upon the responsibilities assigned to the paraprofessional. If the paraprofessional is an instructional aide assisting students with curricular issues, the answer is "yes". However, if the paraprofessional is employed in a computer lab for maintenance, mechanical assistance, or security responsibilities, the paraprofessional would not be considered an instructional aide and would not be required to meet the highly qualified definition.

25. Q Which teachers are required to have a Reading Endorsement?

A Effective July 1, 2001 a reading endorsement shall be required of an individual in the position of reading or literacy specialist, reading or literacy coach, reading or literacy interventionist. (R7-7-2-615F.1).

26. Q How can districts help teachers to become highly qualified?

A Districts that receive Title II-A funds may build capacity by assisting teachers in becoming highly qualified in multiple core academic content areas. The district may assist in paying for the AEPA content knowledge test, college course work, tutoring, or professional development that will assist the teacher become highly qualified when building capacity.

27. Q When will the new requirements for the Reading Endorsement and the Mathematics Endorsement become effective?

A The requirements will become effective on July 1, 2011. See the requirements under Teacher Certification.

28. Q What are the requirements to be a Mathematics Interventionist for grades K-8?

A A Math Interventionist must have 24 semester hours of math credits or pass the Middle Grades Mathematics AEPA.

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